

My name is Jason Najera. As a concerned citizen who accesses the internet on a daily basis, I can tell you that open internet is essential. I'm a student, and access two of my three classes online at the moment via the VCCCD.edu website. I like to consider myself an informed citizen, accessing local and international news on various websites. And as a young man in his early twenties, I thoroughly enjoy communicating with other people in my demographic in all the various ways available to us as de facto members of the Internet generation.

Every day I'm using the internet to do research, both as a student and IT worker. The 'Net is my primary resource for diagnostic tools, from software applications to "teardown guides" for laptops and towers. Quite frankly, there is no alternate source for most of this information. Computer manufacturer websites don't have it, their helplines don't have access to it, current books are rarely (if ever) sold for it, and there are no up-to-date college courses on it either.

Currently, I'm on a DSL connection provided by Verizon at 3Mb/s. The only alternative being Time Warner, who I was with last year. Both are riddled with problems, and I feel as though I've been forced to settle. Verizon throttles my speed, undoubtedly. They denied it on the phone, but I've got new wiring and the best consumer grade routers you can buy. In other words, the best going straight to their line outside my home. My download and upload speeds for sending/receiving files crucial to my work tops out at 200kb/s, rarely touching what I pay for. To make matters worse, I'm on the fastest speed available in my neighborhood, though Fiber Optics (FiOS) is available in every other neighborhood in town. As for Time Warner's cable connection, their connection dropped with such anomalous frequency that I was forced to drop them as my provider, as I could no longer stand having to reset my modem and wait for it to reconnect. At bare minimum, it dropped ten times a day. It did, however, set a record of 29. I don't feel like there's really an option, if one is not satisfying what I'm paying for and the other's service is blatantly unreliable.

There are many rewards and challenges for a working musician who relies on the internet. Being in but my early twenties, I didn't really get to see much of the world before the 'Net went in to effect. However, I will say that going digital has been ridiculously profitable for my father's business as an attorney, as he no longer requires a 5' by 10' storage unit to keep the mandatory 7 years' worth of back records on cases. The challenges, of course, are learning to navigate the internet. The occasional virus infecting his office computers (once or twice a year, by my count - I fix them), and the occasional forgetting of a password, but I have not heard him complain beyond that.

The FCC might deal with the unauthorized filesharing of music by encouraging companies to offer something more comparable, and begin listening to consumers and WHY they bother pirating music/movies/TV shows, as to adapt the industry to meet their standards. A recent court case (RIAA v Joel Tenenbaum) granted exemption for downloaded songs prior to the opening of iTunes in 2003. They're now arguing that it should be extended to 2007, as that was when iTunes went Digital Rights

Management (DRM)-free. Consumers want true choice with what they pay for, as in the ability to move it to as many of their personal devices as they like, without restriction of proprietary file types/formats/DRM. Same goes for games, movies, and TV-shows. To sum it up: We want -REAL- options as consumers. While I don't pirate, I have stopped attending movies in theaters, and no longer have a cable connection by choice, as I believe the declining quality and increased amount of advertising time no longer merit the spending of my dollars. And I'm not alone in this.

I believe the idea of universal broadband access is admirable, and indeed internet access is (as of its conception and realization as a viable method of transferring data/thoughts/ideas between people) a fundamental human right. However, I have yet to see the effect in my area. My hometown is exceptionally low-income, and it seems most of them are still without access to an internet connection, or the knowledge to utilize one if it is made available. This could, perhaps, be a language barrier, as many in the community are Spanish-speaking with English with a second language, if at all. As a sidenote, given my previous experience with Time Warner, I have yet to see any truly affordable form of reliable internet access become available even in populated mid-range income areas. You see, my payments to Verizon are significantly higher.

In regard to wireless internet access net neutrality: The internet is the internet. Be it from a smartphone, e-reader, or home computer, it's the same access to the same content (disregarding screen size/input method), with all of the same websites. As such, the same rules should apply. Any argument that telecommunication companies could possibly come up with cannot, in any way, trump the undeniable right that we all have to equal access and equal treatment as human beings, and as citizens.

There is nothing remotely comparable to the internet in terms of facilitating free speech. It is the one place people feel truly secure in voicing their opinions, without fear of persecution. What are the things we're told to avoid in the workplace or at school? Politics, and religion. What shapes the world around us, and governs our lives as citizens? Well, the government, and as such - politics. The internet is where we can discuss things and seek information on them in a timely manner. Else, people would go to the polls a lot more clueless than they do now. Furthermore, the internet allows people to organize demonstrations, gather signatures for online petitions, and co-ordinate their efforts to create groups that facilitate all kinds of beneficial programs. From simple homework help forums for students to the latest in entertainment news, it keeps us plugged in to the world around us, and limiting that would be like putting blinders on a horse. Only the horse is the average citizen's world view.

Thank you for offering the transparency that you have thus far in this particular piece of legislation, and giving us voice for public comment. It's reassuring to know that the FCC cares about not only consumer rights, but the rights of the citizens it serves. This is the right time to be addressing net

neutrality, before it becomes a problem. Thank you for showing the foresight so many government agencies have been lacking in the last decade.